

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 18  
By Crutchfield

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Reggie White, a native of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the untimely passing of Mr. Reginald Howard "Reggie" White, one of the finest citizens and football players this state has ever produced; and

WHEREAS, Mr. White was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional athlete who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, well-known for his extraordinary athletic gifts, Mr. White achieved his childhood dream of playing professional football; as a defensive lineman in the National Football League, he earned the respect of his fans, peers, and coaches alike for the exemplary quality of his play on the gridiron, and

WHEREAS, true to his sweeping vision of possibilities, Reggie White was also an ordained minister whose boundless love for the Lord led to his ordainment at the precocious age of 17; and

WHEREAS, Reverend White was renowned for both his physical prowess on the field and for his extraordinary gift of spirit; these two distinctions earned him esteemed and well-deserved designation as the "Minister of Defense"; and

WHEREAS, born in 1961 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Mr. White began his spiritual journey as an active and devout member of the Alton Park Bible School, which he served faithfully for many years by following his grandmother's example of commitment to the Lord, which inspired his spiritual awareness; and

WHEREAS, revealing his athletic talents at an early age, Mr. White graduated from Howard High School having been named to the All-State team in basketball and an All-

American in both basketball and football, in addition to being named National Basketball Player of the Year; and

WHEREAS, during his peerless career with the University of Tennessee's football team, Mr. Reggie White set numerous school records, including the records for the most sacks in a game, season, and career; his hard work and dedication led to his selection as an All-American during his senior year; and

WHEREAS, after playing two years in the United States Football League with the Memphis Showboats, Mr. White joined the National Football League where he played for the Philadelphia Eagles, the Green Bay Packers, and the Carolina Panthers; during his illustrious career as a defensive lineman, Reggie White led the Green Bay Packers to the team's first Super Bowl victory in more than 30 years, was named to 13 consecutive Pro Bowls from 1986 to 1998, was named Defensive Player of the Year in both 1987 and 1998, produced double-digit sacks in 12 of his 15 seasons, and, at the time of his retirement in 2001, held the NFL's all-time record for sacks with 198; and

WHEREAS, Mr. White's dedication to humble Christian service was a blessing to those communities he touched, and he was a role model for others, both on and off the playing field; his unending labors reflected his generosity of heart and spirit and his love for all people; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Reggie White loved and worked tirelessly for the benefit of young people, especially those in inner cities; for many years, Mr. White returned to the neighborhood of his childhood to lend a hand at the Bethlehem Center in Alton Park; Mr. White also sponsored the "Reggie and Friends Football Camp" to promote knowledge and character development in at-risk youth throughout Hamilton County; as always, his presence planted seeds of faith in those around him, and the children who shared of his spirit carried away with them the inner fortitude he espoused; and

WHEREAS, Reverend White was well known for his advocacy on behalf of his beliefs and his allegiance to serving the needs of his fellow man; his activism included his participation in the founding of numerous organizations, including the National Society of Nehemiah, the Inner Cities Church in Knoxville, a community investment bank to stimulate small businesses in inner-city neighborhoods, a home for unwed mothers, and the CAUSE ministry, Christian Athletes United for Spiritual Empowerment; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Reggie White was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to community, family, and spiritual values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, the son of Thelma Collier and Charles White and brother to Christy White and Julius Dodds, Mr. Reggie White was blessed with the loving companionship of his wife, Sara, and was the proud father of one son, Jeremy, and one daughter, Jecolia; and

WHEREAS, Mr. White leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional athlete, religious leader, role model, public servant, and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Mr. Reginald Howard "Reggie" White, gifted athlete, faithful friend, devoted family man, and model servant to the Lord, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Reggie White.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.